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AP English Language

4. There is only one correct way to interpret the Bible.

Depending on how you interpret and perceive this question, the answer varies. If you look at it conservatively and think back historically to when it was originally written then yes, there really is only one correct way to interpret the Bible because I’m sure a group of Hawthorne’s didn’t gather around a table eluding one thing to another. However, if you look at the question in a more modernized sense then you’d say there is not, because people are different and views vary depending on our beliefs and morals. The differing ways that one interprets this question shows that life is all about perception, let’s say if I read Nathaniel Hawthorne’s The Scarlet Letter. Now I may sit there throughout the book and realize wow religion is actually really dumb and condemning a woman to a life of shame over one action is not only incomprehensible but immoral. However someone else reading the book might look at it and realize how moral values have deteriorated and if Hester was in a more modern environment her actions would have been praised. Both of these interpretations of the novels are subject to the person and perception, none of these are right or wrong however the book itself was written with an essential message and that cannot be taken away from it. The fact is there is one way to interpret things especially the Bible, but I think nobody has quite found the exact way it was meant to be interpreted yet, which has led to so many denominations of one simple religion. If we think back to the 19th century when Andrew Jackson was President the bible was used as the basis for “Manifest Destiny”; an absurd theory where people believed that it was their divine destiny under god to redeem their land and create the image of “America”. In order to do so Americans kicked thousands of Native Indians or “heathens” out of their home land, so that to recreate their “city upon a hill”. At the time using the bible as an excuse to kill, relocate and destroy Indians lives under the Indian Removal Act of 1830 seemed like the right thing to do under the divinity of god. When we look back at it now I hope people come to realize that these actions are wrong. Andrew Jackson and the followers of Manifest Destiny interpreted gods teachings in a way that justified murder and immoral behavior, however nowhere is it clearly stated that the genocide of a subhuman race is acceptable under terms of acquiring land. The act was done under influences of different perceptions of who god was as a person, nobody has ever met god, and nobody has directly spoken to him. But the way these people interpreted the bible allowed them to believe that if god were alive at the time he would have said “hey yeah that’s fine go right ahead”. As morally close to god as people may feel in my opinion I think people like to use the good old god argument to justify the most immoral actions known to man. With this being said I think that there is a correct way to interpret the Bible but what I define as morally correct, someone who believes in mass genocide of a certain race might find correct as well. No one knows the actual correct way to interpret the Bible, and at the pace the human race is going it’ll take us years before we can emotionally evolve in a species that’ll be able to correctly interpret it.